Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of the claims in the application.

Claims Listing

1. (Currently Amended) A method for detecting, isolating or purifying an organism comprising:

placing a sample in contact with a device, wherein at least a portion of the device comprises a plurality of zones, wherein at least one zone is a detection zone capable of being separated from said plurality of zones and the remainder of the device; wherein the detection zone comprises an immobilized binding partner for an analyte and wherein binding between the immobilized binding partner and a suspected analyte causes formation of a detectable signal and detection of the signal indicates the presence of a suspected analyte in the sample;

separating at least part of the detection zone containing the bound analyte and immobilized binding partner from said plurality of zones and the remainder of the device; and

analyzing the ~~portion~~ separated detection zone containing the bound analyte and immobilized binding partner without detaching the bound analyte from the immobilized binding partner to provide information regarding the suspected analyte; and

wherein the analyte is an organism.

2. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the device is a lateral flow device.

3. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the information identifies the suspected analyte.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the information describes one or more characteristics of the suspected analyte.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 1, further comprising:

placing the separated detection zone ~~portion~~ containing the bound analyte and immobilized binding partner in conditions effective to cause the quantity of the suspected analyte to increase~~; and~~

~~separating at least part of the suspected analyte from the portion containing the bound analyte and immobilized binding partner after an increase in the quantity of the suspected analyte~~.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein ~~the analyte is an organism and~~ analyzing the separated detection zone ~~portion~~ containing the bound analyte and immobilized binding partner comprises placing the separated detection zone ~~portion~~ containing the bound analyte and immobilized binding partner on or in a selective growth medium in which the analyte will proliferate if present.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the method further comprises storing the device without further processing for up to five days after placing the sample in contact with the device and before separating the detection zone containing the bound analyte and immobilized binding partner from the plurality of zones and the remainder of the device.

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Currently Amended) A kit for performing the method of Claim 1, comprising a device; wherein at least a portion of the device comprises a plurality of zones, wherein at least one zone is a detection zone; wherein the detection zone comprises an immobilized binding partner for an analyte, and is capable of being separated from said plurality of zones and the remainder of the device and, wherein the separated detection zone is analyzed to provide information regarding the bound analyte; and wherein the analyte is an organism.

10. (Currently Amended) A device wherein at least a portion of the device comprises a plurality of zones, wherein at least one zone is a detection zone capable of being separated from said plurality of zones and the remainder of the device; wherein the detection zone comprises an immobilized binding partner for an analyte and wherein binding between

the immobilized binding partner and a suspected analyte causes formation of a detectable signal in the detection zone, and wherein the device comprises structural features that facilitate separation of the detection zone containing the bound analyte and the immobilized binding partner or a part of the detection zone containing the bound analyte and the immobilized binding partner from the plurality of zones and the remainder of the device~~.~~, wherein said separated detection zone or part thereof can be analyzed to provide information regarding the bound analyte; and wherein the analyte is an organism.

11. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~claim 8,~~ Claim 1, wherein the ~~substance~~ analyte ~~is a~~ further comprises a food or ~~soil~~ environmental contaminant.

12. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~claim 8,~~ Claim 1, wherein the ~~substance~~ analyte is a ~~microorganism~~ bacteria.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~claim 8,~~ claim 1, wherein the ~~substance~~ analyte is a pathogen.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~Claim 8~~, Claim 26, wherein the device is a lateral flow device.

15. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~Claim 8,~~ Claim 26, wherein the information identifies the suspected analyte.

16 (Currently Amended) The method of ~~Claim 8~~, Claim 26 wherein the information describes one or more characteristics of the suspected analyte.

17-19 (Cancelled)

20. (Currently Amended) The ~~method~~ device of Claim 10, wherein the device is a lateral flow device.

21. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~claim 8,~~ Claim 1, wherein analyzing the separated detection zone ~~portion~~ containing the bound analyte and immobilized binding partner to provide information regarding the suspected analyte comprises analyzing the separated detection zone ~~portion~~ containing the bound analyte and immobilized binding partner using a strip test binding assay, an agglutination assay, a DNA polymerase chain reaction test, a motility test, a toxicology test, serotyping~~, selective media or selective agar plating~~.

22. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~claim 8,~~ Claim 1, wherein analyzing the separated detection zone ~~portion~~ containing the bound analyte and immobilized binding partner to provide information regarding the suspected analyte comprises analyzing the separated detection zone ~~portion~~ containing the bound analyte and immobilized binding partner using a DNA polymerase chain reaction test.

23. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~claim 8,~~ Claim 1, wherein analyzing the separated detection zone ~~portion~~ containing the bound analyte and immobilized binding partner to provide information regarding the suspected analyte comprises analyzing the separated detection zone ~~portion~~ containing the bound analyte and immobilized binding partner using selective media or selective agar plating.

24. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~claim 8,~~ Claim 1, wherein the ~~substance~~ analyte is Escherichia coli, Salmonella or Listeria.

25. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~claim 8,~~ Claim 24, wherein the ~~substance~~ analyte is Escherichia coli ~~O157:H7~~ O157.

26. (New) A method for detecting, isolating or concentrating an organism comprising:

placing a sample in contact with a device, wherein at least a portion of the device comprises a plurality of zones, wherein at least one zone is a detection zone capable of being separated from said plurality of zones and the remainder of the device; wherein the detection zone comprises an immobilized binding partner for an analyte and wherein binding between the immobilized binding partner and a suspected analyte causes formation of a detectable signal and detection of the signal indicates the presence of a suspected analyte in the sample;

separating at least part of the detection zone containing the bound analyte and immobilized binding partner from said plurality of zones and the remainder of the device; and

subjecting the separated detection zone to conditions effective to cause proliferation, replication or reproduction of the analyte; and

wherein the analyte is an organism.

27. (New) The method of Claim 26 wherein the organism is a bacteria.

28. (New) The method of Claim 26, wherein the detectable signal is an optically detectable signal.

29. (New) The method of Claim 1, wherein the detectable signal is a visually detectable signal.

30. (New) The device of claim 10, wherein the detectable signal in the detection zone is a visually detectable signal.